

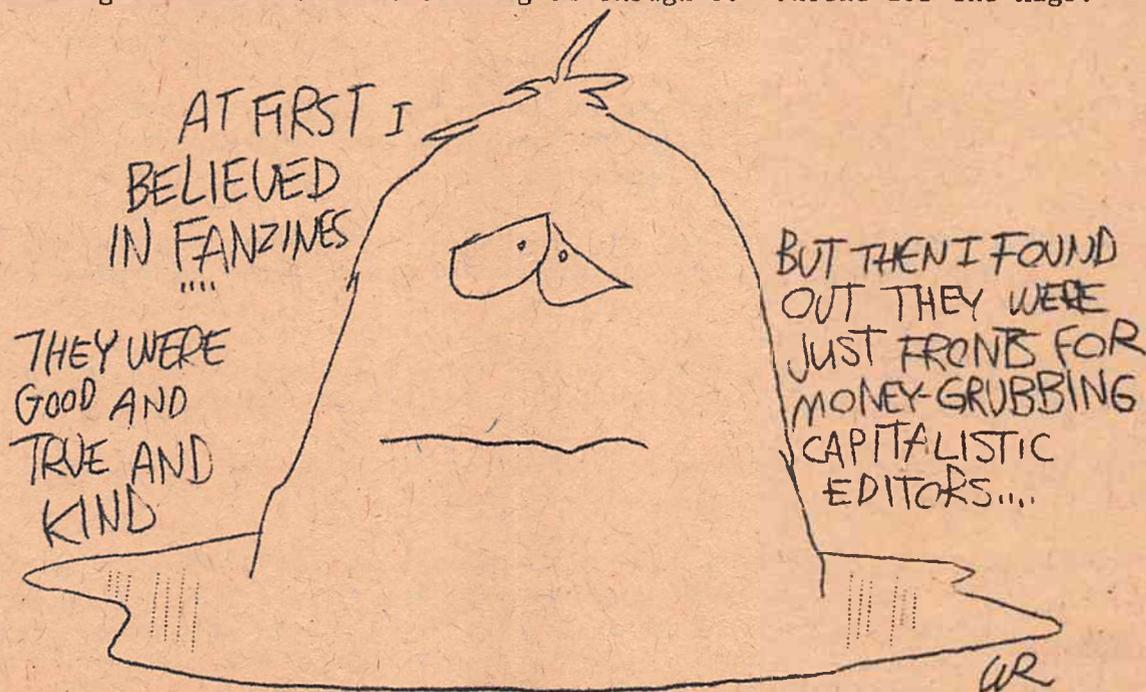
FOCAL POINT, Volume 2, Number 28, a fanzine of news, views, and reviews, is edited by Arnie Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201). Invaluable Help: Joyce Fisher. Editors Emeritus: Rich Brown & Mike McInerney. Australian Agent: John Bangsund (1/8 Bundalohn Ct., St. Kilda, Vict. 3182, Australia 12/A\$3.) Published bi-weekly, it is available for news, all-for-all trades, or \$6/\$1. Illustrations by Jay Kinney, Steve Stiles, and Bill Rotsler. April 12, 1971.

WALKER TO PUBLISH GERNSBACK NOVEL What kind of novel would you expect from the man who founded Radio Electronics, Amazing, and Sexology? Unbelievable as it may seem, "The Ultimate World" by Poppa Hugo, which will be published by Walker Books in the fall, is a super science sexy sf novel.

The 70,000 word book, written in 1958, is reportedly fairly well written, polished far beyond the crude style of Gernsback's early fiction. A scene describing sex in freefall is reportedly of especial interest.

As an added bonus, the book will have a dust jacket by Frank R. Paul, which Hugo commissioned to illustrate the novel. Walker has three additional Paul illos for "The Ultimate World" but they haven't yet decided whether to use them.

Wouldn't it be a gas if it turns out to be good enough to contend for the Hugo?



HUGO

NOMINATIONS

NOVEL

Ringworld - Larry Niven
Star Light - Hal Clement
Tau Zero - Poul Anderson
The Tower of Glass - Robert Silverberg
Year of the Quiet Sun - Wilson Tucker

SHORT STORY

"Brillo" - Ben Bova & Harlan Ellison
"Continued on Next Rock" - R.A. Lafferty
"In the Queue" - Keith Laumer
"Jean Dupres" - Gordon Dickson
"Slow Sculpture" - Theodore Sturgeon

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Leo and Diane Dillon
Frank Kelly Freas
Jack Gaughan
Eddie Jones
Jeff Jones

FANZINE

ENERGUMEN
LOCUS
OUTWORLDS
SF REVIEW
SPECULATION

FAN WRITER

Terry Carr
Tom Digby
Elizabeth Fishman
Richard Geis
Ted Pauls

FAN ARTIST

Alicia Austin
Steve Fabian
Mike Gilbert
Tim Kirk
William Rotsler

NOVELLA

"Beastchild" - Dean R. Koontz
"Ill Met in Lankmar" - Fritz Leiber
"The Region Between" - Harlan Ellison
"The Thing in the Stone" - Clifford Simak
"The World Outside" - Robert Silverberg

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

"Blows Against the Empire"
"Colossus: The Forbin Project"
"Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers"
"Hauser's Memory"
"No Blade of Grass"

PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE

AMAZING
ANALOG
FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION
GALAXY
VISION OF TOMORROW

NOREASCON NEWS There were 351 Hugo nominating ballots received by the Noreascon committee. Eight nominations were received from fans belonging to the Heicon only, while the balance came from Noreascon members.

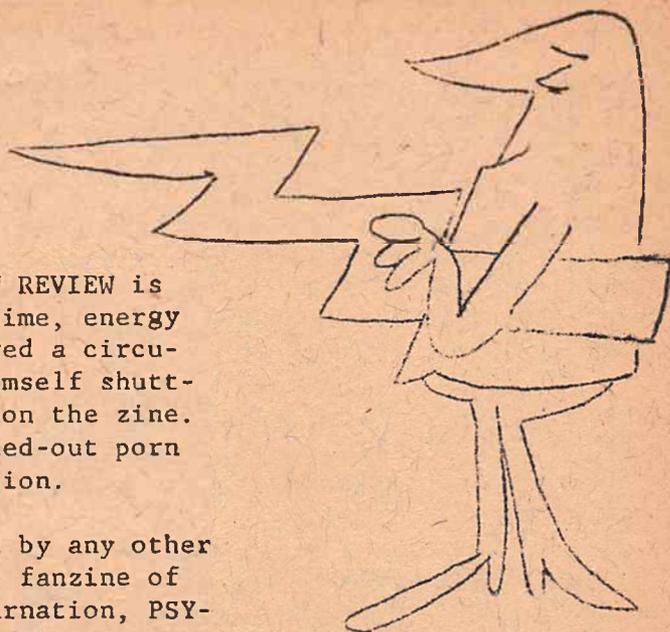
Harry Stubbs (Hal Clement) has decided to withdraw from the Noreascon committee because his novel Star Light has been nominated for the Best Novel Hugo. No replacement for Harry as Treasurer has yet been named.

In the Novella category, Fritz Leiber's "The Snow Women" was also nominated, but Mr. Leiber asked that it be withdrawn and his other novella be left in competition.

As of April 1, membership in the Noreascon stood at 918. New York leads Mass. in worldcon memberships 129 to 114 with California third with 89.

FINLAY ART BOOK OUT SOON FROM DON GRANT Don Grant has announced the imminent publication of a book of the best work of the late sf and fantasy artist Virgil Finlay. Art book size, the book will contain reproductions of some of Finlay's best work, including an unknown number of color plates. Sam Moskowitz has revised his Finlay bio which originally appeared in WORLDS OF TOMORROW and expanded it considerably, to 7500 - 10,000 words, to serve as an introduction to the book. Further information about the book can be obtained from Don Grant, West Kingston, Rhode Island.

SFR FOLDS



Dick Geis has announced that SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is suspending publication. SFR takes so much time, energy and money to publish, now that it has achieved a circulation of more than 1500, that Dick found himself shutting his professional writing aside to work on the zine. In the future he intends to write fewer hacked-out porn novels and attempt to sell some science fiction.

PSYCHOTIC/SFR has had a history unparalleled by any other fanzine, in that it has been the focal point fanzine of two different fandoms. In its original incarnation, PSYCHOTIC took over after QUANDRY and VEGA had folded as the focal point of sixth fandom. He maintained this position for a year of steady monthly publication, during which he featured much fine material, including an excellent regular column by the late Vernon L. McCain.

PSY's schedule slipped a bit, and Geis found that his interests began to change from what they had been. Too argumentative to remain truly popular with the mature and easy-going fans who had made QUANDRY such a great fanzine, Geis began pushing PSY toward a concern with science fiction rather than fandom. In mid-1955, Geis published the first issue of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, numbered 21 to follow PSY's numbering scheme. There was a second SFR, but it didn't meet with the overwhelming acceptance for which Geis had hoped and it was discontinued. A few very short issues of PSY were published on the way to gafiation, and the less said about them, the better.

In mid-1967 Dick Geis bobbed up in fandom again, as a waiting-lister of the Cult. I wrote to him and was surprised to find that not only did he intend to resume activity, but he intended to revive PSYCHOTIC as a personalzine of moderate size.

PSYCHOTIC #21 appeared in November 1967. He numbered it 21, he told me at the time, because he had forgotten everything after the last full-sized PSY in 1955. The revived PSY was a thin, 17-page issue composed of writings by the editor, a reprint by Harry Warner about the founding of his genzine SPACEWAYS, and a light look at the Columbus worldcon bid and a would-be Secret Master by me.

The reaction to this evidence of reawakened interest was overwhelming. PSY #22 had articles by White and Tucker, and a revival of Ellison's column "Voice from the Styx" in addition to Geis' writing and lots of letters.

From then on, there was no holding PSYCHOTIC back. With material dealing with both fandom and science fiction and the liveliest letter column seen in fandom since HABAK-KUK, PSY quickly established itself as the focal point of a new, 8th Fandom.

PSY #24 was a landmark issue in several respects. Norman Spinrad made his PSY debut with an article discussing censorship in the science fiction field. Earl Evers started "A Primer for Heads", a five-part series giving information on virtually every drug commonly used to get high. "Stuff & Fanac" also began in #24. This was John Berry's

attempt to buck the trend in PSY which was gradually de-emphasizing fandom and placing the spotlight on science fiction, especially reviews of sf books.

The letter column continued to heat up, fueled by the controversial articles Geis had a talent for unearthing and the way he edited the letter column to point up areas of contention.

Things went over the top in PSY #27. Harry Harrison took out after Ted White with fire in his eyes and hate in his heart. Ted, no shrinking violet in these matters, fired back, and the war was on for real. It was probably only coincidental that Geis changed the name of the letter column from "Section Eight" to "Box 3116" just when the name was becoming particularly apt.

After PSY #27 sweeping changes were made in PSY, beginning with the name which became SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. The zine went half-size and photo-offset, and there was a noticeable shifting of emphasis in the content which featured an increasing amount of capsule book reviews.

The three half-sized issues were a turning point for SFR. The last major pieces of fannish material SFR ever printed appeared in these issues, including the last installment of "Stuff & Fanac". "A Primer for Heads" also finished up, and thereafter Geis stayed pretty much with science fiction in the various media. Two new columns, more consonant with Geis' purpose, showed up for the first time: "The Banks Deposit", a prozine review column by Banks Mebane, and "Beer Mutterings" by Poul Anderson.

SFR returned to mimeo and standard size pages, but continued its new policy of relying heavily on book reviews. Another sf-ish column, Piers Anthony's "Off the Deep End" debuted in SFR #31. Samuel Delany had the first of a pair of articles in the same issue, the other one appearing in #33. "Noise Level", the last of SFR's major columns to come into the fold, began in #34, with John Brunner taking on James Blish.

Except for the wrangling between Alex Panshin and Franz Rottensteiner which kicked off in SFR #35, Geis seemed to be trying to keep the discussions on a somewhat higher plane, and even Alex and Franz didn't approach the White-Harrison embroglio.

Having achieved such stature that any writer who wanted to address fandom and prodom at large on the subject of science fiction immediately thought in terms of sending it to SFR, Dick began working on building the circulation, gaining advertising, and generally making approaches to semi-pro status.

Eventually, the work load, the sheer mind-bending clerical chores which go with a fanzine that goes to 1500 people, caught up with him, and he has decided to fold. But whether one admires his goals or not -- and speaking honestly, I don't -- Geis dominated fandom with PSY/SFR between the NYCon and the St. Louiscon as thoroughly as any faned has dominated the field in many years.

-- Arnie Katz

FOCAL POINT has been a little erratic in schedule so far in its second year, and the Fannal has still not appeared. I'm very sorry about this, but planning for even a small wedding is taking a lot of time, time that we'd ordinarily devote to FOCAL POINT and other fannish pursuits. I hope you'll all be patient with me until May if we don't come out as punctually as before and haven't redeemed all our promises yet. Both the Fannal and The Enchanted Duplicator are being readied for publication, and will be out just as soon as I can get over the shock of being married. I haven't lost interest in the zine, quite the contrary, and I think you'll like the improvements I'll be introducing in the next few issues. - Arnie

terry carr



THE INFINITE BEANIE

I'm still recovering from all the socialac that surrounded the recent Nebula Awards Banquet: all sorts of people in town, parties, lunches, houseguests. Sid Coleman and Kate MacLean were both staying with us, in different rooms, and Friday night we were joined by Sid's friend Mitzi the lawyer for dinner out and then general talk and tomfoolery back at our place.

Mitzi was talking about how as a kid you often misunderstand what words mean. "I asked my mother what D-r-period stood for and she told me it meant doctor. So for years I thought we lived on Riverside Doctor."

"Oh, that's great," said Sid. "And did you get confused about Street Patrick, Street Catherine and so on?"

"Yes," said Carol, "and then there's the Avenue Maria."

How was the Nebula banquet, you ask? Well, I thought it was fascinating, no matter what putdowns may have been written by reporters for other newszines who probably would've enjoyed the evening more if they'd been on the program themselves. For one thing, there was Lester del Rey serving as toastmaster even though Lester refuses to be a member of SFWA because he's opposed to the group. So naturally you know the kind of thing he said during his time with the mike: he roasted the organization's practices and pretenses and officers and publications, all in his dry jesting way but scoring a couple of hits anyway. The SFWA officers sat at the head table and pretended they weren't turning green. Various SFWA members later complained that Lester's tirade had been in bad taste, but I just thought it was funny. Lester, of course, was wrong in most of the things he said, but nobody who's annoyed with SFWA this year can be all bad.

There were also the customary talks by One (1) Scientist and One (1) Editor, and half of these speeches was good. Isaac Asimov, who was pressed into service at the last moment to make the presentation of awards, did a good job overall, though of course there was the unfortunate announcement of the short story award. Isaac looked at the list of winners that had been handed him and said, "For best short story of the year, the winner is...The Island of Doctor Death by Gene Wolfe!" Much applause around the room, and Gene Wolfe rose to walk to the podium, and then Gordy Dickson was whispering intensely into Isaac's ear. Isaac's eyes grew round. "You're kidding!" he wailed. Gordy whispered at him some more. "He's not kidding, folks," said Isaac. "Gene Wolfe, I'm sorry, you didn't win this award after all.

The winner in the voting for best short story of the year is No Award."

The list of winners Isaac had showed the winners and second and third place stories; he'd seen "No Award" listed but had thought it was a joke. So for thirty seconds Gene Wolfe had won a Nebula and then it was snatched away. See what I mean about it being an interesting banquet? What with that memorable half-minute and Lester's, ah, unusual speech, it was a weird night -- most enjoyable provided your head is screwed on at an odd angle, as mine often is. (But poor Gene!)

We were at a table that included Isaac, Sid Coleman and Harlan Ellison. Isaac and Harlan have this machismo rivalry shtick going for years now, like a running gag that died once but keeps coming back to haunt its murderers. (The Running Gag is probably one of those Little Known Game Animals that Dean Grennell writes about for some nonfan rag: you know, like the Colossal Blunder, the Nameless Dread and the Dark Foreboding.) This evening Isaac pulled from his pocket a slip of paper and said to Harlan, "Two days ago I made an appearance at the University of Something-or-other." (Isaac wasn't unsure, I am.) "The rate for one appearance was \$1200.00 -- you see here where it says the figure? And what, you may ask, did they pay me such a respectable fee for? The answer is here on this line: see, it says 'Stud Activities.'"

Harlan looked, and indeed that was what it said, without even a period after the first word to indicate it might be short for "student." Harlan shook his head in distress. "They paid you more than they paid me!" he moaned.

Sid said, "Isaac, may I see that?"

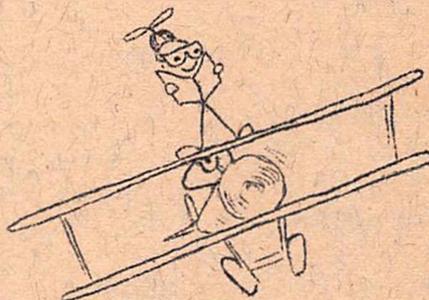
"By all means," said Isaac. "Here; gaze upon it and envy me to your heart's content."

After a minute Sid looked up from his perusal and said, "But Isaac, I don't see anywhere on here where it says who was supposed to pay the \$1200.00, them or you."

That's the sort of high-level discussion we have in our inner circles of the esoteric professional world, in case you ever wondered. Later, after the banquet was over, SFWA threw a big open party in the Oak Room of the Hotel Algonquin, at which Damon Knight started peanut-throwing fights with everyone within range, then when his fire began to be returned he hid behind Carol, next to whom he was sitting. Carol says she doesn't think she suffered any permanent brain damage as a result of the bombardment, but god knows what they'll think of to do at these Nebula banquets next. Maybe water-pistols.

No, but really, it was a fun evening.

The other day I called one of my many big-time pro friends on the phone, and he said, "Hi, whaddya know?" He always says this when



someone phones him, every time for as long as I've known him.

"You always say that," I said. "What do you mean, what do I know? I don't know anything or I'd mention it. Why do you keep asking?"

"Well, I want to find out what you know," he said.

And suddenly a great light dawned for me. "Oh, is that what you want to know. Well, why didn't you ask?"

"I did; I said, 'Whaddya know?'"

"Yeah," I said, "I guess you did at that. Well, here's the sum total of everything I know: the Universe is a giant ever-expanding sphere of silly-putty."

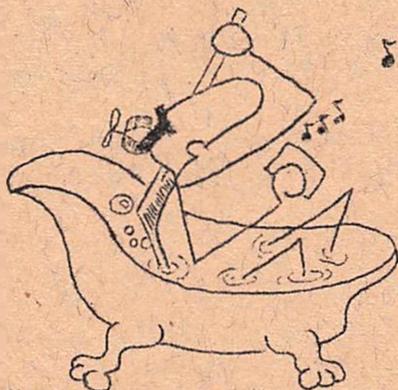
There was a pause, then he said, "I'll be damned. That's what A. E. van Vogt said at the Rio Conference."

"I didn't know he was talking on that subject," I said.

"He wasn't, but that was what it sounded like he was saying."

Ever since Carol and I let the news out that we're planning to move to California this September, people keep mentioning earthquakes to us. Carol has taken to saying, "I don't care whose fault it is, I don't want to live on it," though this is only in jest, because I've explained carefully to her that in California an earthquake, if you

manage to feel it at all, seems just like a subway passing beneath. (When I first came to New York I thought we were having an earthquake every time a subway car went by, for the first three or four of them.)



We were talking recently with a friend of a friend, who lives in San Francisco, and he was coming on all heavy about earthquakes. I listened to ten minutes of this before a lightbulb went on over my head. "You're not originally from California, are you?" I said.

"Why, no; I'm from New York; I've only lived in San Francisco for a couple of years. How did you know?"

The reason was that no one who's lived long in California thinks anything at all about earthquakes. When an earthquake happens in California, people laugh and dance and have block parties. Living where an earthquake is happening, even a freak one as severe as the recent one in Los Angeles, is a lot safer than walking the streets of New York at night.

Fandom never ceases to amaze me: always something new and unexpected. I've just seen the results of the LOCUS Poll, and the nominations for this year's Hugos; I'm not sure which has the more grotesque revelations. On the Hugo ballot, And Chaos Died isn't even nominated, for instance, while Harlan Ellison's The Region Between and Keith Laumer's In the Queue did pick up nominations in their categories. Why, that's fantastic. And one of the five fanzine writers nominated is Tom Digby, of whom I've barely heard.

On that LOCUS Poll, I see that Heinlein's I Will Fear No Evil is a better novel than Hal Clement's Star Light, one of this year's Hugo nominees. Also I see that Alexis Gilliland is a better fan cartoonist than Jay Kinney, and that Ted Pauls and Piers Anthony are both better fan writers than either Rosemary Ulliot or Greg Benford. Oh, it's amazing what you can learn if you just ask everyone who votes in polls what he thinks, then tabulate the results. Statistics don't lie, they just tell jokes.

But Ted Pauls' placing on the LOCUS Poll would have been even higher if there hadn't been a separate category for fan critics, to which most of Pauls' votes were diverted, presumably. Ted is nominated for the fanzine writer Hugo this year, along with other top names like Tom Digby and me. Harry Warner, who was voted best fan writer on the LOCUS Poll and did similarly well on the Egoboo Poll about which you'll be reading next issue for sure, isn't on the list of nominees for that Hugo, which saddens me somewhat. I know there's a tradition for anyone who's won a Fanwriter Hugo to decline to put his name on the ballot again, and that Harry might enjoy some edge in the voting because he's Fan Guest of Honor at the worldcon this year, but the thing is that since I figure I'm not going to win that Hugo, somebody good should, and if not Harry then who's going to beat Ted Pauls? (Don't say Dick Geis -- I'll scream.)

Well look, part of this is just my ego anticipating the bruise it's going to get, of course. I wouldn't mind getting beaten by Harry Warner, but getting beaten by Ted Pauls would/will be another matter.

I was talking about this stuff with Greg Benford on the phone, and he said, "What the hell; ten thousand years from now, who'll care?"

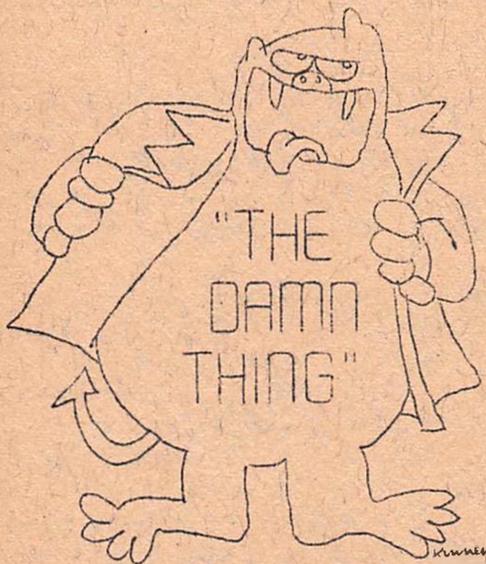
"Me, I'll care," I told him.

Greg said, "Ah, so what -- ten thousand years from now you'll be a turtle."

I said, "Yes, and that's why I'll be a turtle."

I had a swell idea the other day for a "unisex" name for Women's Lib types to give their kids: "It." Isn't that perfect? No sexual identity at all! (Actually, I came up with this in connection with writing a novel: "It woke, and opened its eyes" etc. For 200 pages. Groovy. Far out. Well, weird anyway.)

ALL
OUR
YES
TER
DAY
S



HARRY
WARNER

I can prove that 1941 was a long time ago. First: a fanzine was considered magnificently daring when it was given the title *The Damn Thing*. Second: its editor introduced a story with a note which concluded "I've got to fill this mag with something," and the something was fiction by Ray Bradbury.

T. Bruce Yerke was editor of *The Damn Thing*, one of the earliest of the nose-thumbing, faanish fanzines. It emanated from Los Angeles, which normally emitted sercon publications, and very possibly it had a major influence on later fanzine editors like Charles Burbee and Francis T. Laney. Yerke didn't edit it nearly as long as Laney published *Fandango* or Burb produced *Shaggy*, and it's not as much fun to read as the later insurgent publications from Los Angeles. But its five and one-half issues are notable for the instant nostalgia that they can evoke for lost people and times, and even though I've never seen a copy advertised for sale, I suspect that the Yerke fanzine would command a quite high figure nowadays from anyone collecting Bradburyana. There's something under his byline in four of the five complete issues, and it's quite probable that he was also responsible for some of the pseudonymous material. Bradbury is also responsible for at least one of the covers, a head and shoulders cartoon that isn't bad at all, and appears to be in imitation of Virgil Partch, who contributed occasionally to fanzines of that era.

"I haven't bought or read a professional science-fiction magazine since the middle of 1939. They became so putrid I got sick," Tubby wrote in the editorial of the first issue, dated November, 1940. His outlook on golden age *Astounding* and certain other prozines highly respected today was matched by the way he felt toward some fans. A few of the milder remarks he directed toward the New York City-area fans who were acting as if they planned a worldcon in 1941 in competition to the Denvention: "The same person who has done more agitation in the fan world, and caused more hard feelings and unfavorable publicity for science fiction in general, is now doing his latest dirty stunt... We trust that the bigots behind the idea are quite happy that they've

been able to make things difficult for the more honorable faction of science fiction fan circles. The editor can express only the most detestable opinion for any group that would deliberately attempt to sabotage the activities of the majority of fans... We trust that the blustering bulls and sour egotists of the Newark pushers will be told just where the hell they stand by the rest of U.S. fans..." No, I don't know whom Yerke meant by the opening sentence quoted.

More interesting than the 15-line story in this first issue by Bradbury is a personality sketch by someone identified as Ben Dover Farr. At one time, Bradbury seems to have been very nearly the court jester in Los Angeles fandom. "Bradbury was neither a critique nor the Rabelanasian (sic) that he is now," good old Ben says. "He was simply a wacky student of Los Angeles High School. Then one night Bradbury came in and commenced to hold his nose, giving imitations of Franklin D., W.C. Fields, and Fred Allen. We all followed

his example and held our noses. Ever since then we have been plagued by Bradbury's imitations... Today, Bradbury is a critique. He is an aristocrat. He is Rayoul Douglasse Bradbury, a most unique individual... Rayoul attends all the latest affairs of Hollywood. He is on speaking terms with Jack Benny, with whom his father went to school in Waukegan... Rayoul also is acquainted with a number of Hollywoodians. His favorite hangout is the Brown Derby on Vine Street, though he gets his meals at Hugo's Hot Dog stand across the street. Here, in front of the Brown Derby, he points out (but never speaks to) all the celebrities to anyone who may be with him. And yet, Rayoul makes his living as a news hawker on 10th and Normandie! What we can't figure out is how in the devil he makes his \$10 a week stretch like it does."

Ray replied to this description in the second issue of The Damn Thing. Yerke, he wrote, "suggests to me an epileptic beer-barrel doing a jig in a delicate old Chinese print. But still, all those who know Bruce have grown to love him. Even Bobsy Heinlein loves Bruce. Even after that article which Bobsy made Brucey toss out of The Damned Thing... Brucey wanted to print an article in this issue telling all about Bobsy and his strange reasonings on Technocracy, only Bobsy dint have no sense of humor and he threatened to sue."

In this second issue, Bradbury had a longer story, Genie Trouble! It is notable mostly because of a passage that seems to have obsessed Ray at this time. It kept turning up in one little story after another that he published in fanzines, usually with a change in noun. "There sat a genie. Not a BIG genie. That would be silly. But a little genie." It was a Martian, I believe, in a short-short he contributed to my fanzine, Spaceways.

A purely personal pang strikes me everytime I look at an advertisement in the third issue. I had all sorts of trouble finding clear photographs to illustrate All Out Yesterdays and I quiver all over at thoughts of what might have been if I'd somehow found someone with the pictures advertised for sale in this issue. Ackerman, Morojo, Bradbury, and Hornig standing in front of the former Futurian House. An early LA Hallowe'en party including Heinlein, Daughterty in cowboy outfit, Ackerman, and others. "Yerke having fit over stencil." Jack Williamson and Daugherty talking in Walt's car, guaranteed to be candid. "Nash breakdown on way to Pomona, showing Hornig, Bradbury & Nash." Film is prominent in another startling way elsewhere in this issue. Yerke wrote some paragraphs about fannish events in Los Angeles, and included some remarks about a then fan who later had considerably more success with movies than on that night of January 9, 1941: "A brief intermission was held while the ancient and creaking movie projector which was being jointly operated by Ray Harryhausen, Arthur L. Joquel and Yerke, was stopped to permit it to cool. With a gigantic light in the lamphouse, there was no means of fanning it. The damned machine got so hot that people around it were moving away, and the insides of the thing were scorched. Not so funny was the danger of fire, as the old-fashioned film is the highly inflammable type. To act as a precaution, ten or twelve glasses of water were sitting beside the operators, and they weren't for drinking purposes. In case of emergency, Joquel was to pull the plug, Yerke pour water down the top opening, and Harryhausen attempt to extract the burning film." And Yerke was still commenting on New York City area fandom: "Congratulations, Burford, for knocking Sykora half across the room, even if it did start a riot."

The Bradbury contribution to this issue is the closest so far to a real short story. "How am I today, Doctor?" is described as similar to a story in Thrilling Wonder Stories several years previously, although to me it sounds more like a short-short by Weinbaum which was published, as far as I know, only in Fantasy Magazine. It's about a hypochondriac who wants to live practically for ever and worries more and more as he feels better and better. Eventually his doctor gets tired of his patient, gives him a pill containing poison, and after the patient has asked the title question for the last time, the doctor tells him: "You were never better off than you are now."

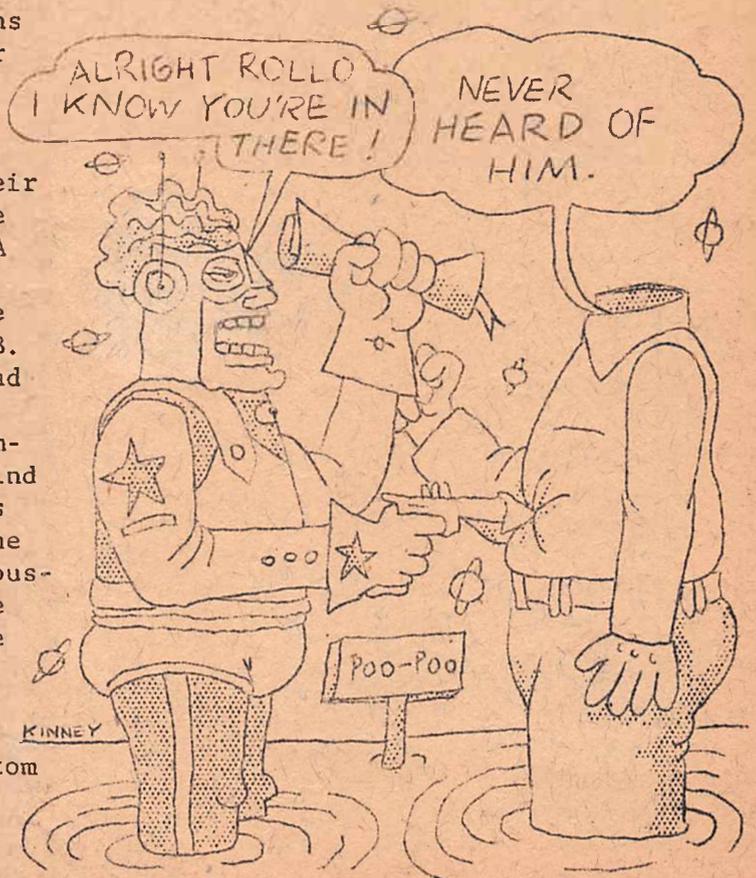
Somewhere in the Ackermansion, I imagine, is a fabulously rare small piece of yellow paper which riled dreadfully yet another pseudonymous writer in the fifth issue of The Damn Thing. Here's a superb demonstration of how much fondness we can feel for the enemy after he no longer threatens us. Ackerman's home was the place where Claude Bloomer Quid had seen the note sent out with the Science Fiction League emblem by Thrilling Wonder Stories. Here is the text of that note:

"Hi, Space Pilot! Red Spot of Jupiter, but here's that gold-plated SFL emblem your old Space Sarge has been telling you about on his etheradio. It's as rare as a Marian fire-opal, you can bet a sun against a meteor, and I had to comb the nine planets to find it. Well, Rocket Rookie, this button makes you a full-fledged space veteran. You're welcome now to passages on all voyages of the good ship Thrilling Wonder Stories, Startling Stories, and Captain Future. And I'll be riding the space lanes with you in every issue. All the luck in the Universe.

"Sergeant Saturn".

But some of the fun had gone out of The Damn Thing by the time this last complete issue was stenciled. The needling, the parody, and the slapstick humor of the earlier issues had begun to turn into more serious, sometimes nasty, fussing. As you might expect, a penname was used for one of the blasts. I more or less agree with Fywert King, who wrote in defense of conscientious objection, as far as his arguments are concerned. But some of his statements are quite as far below the belt blows as the paragraph by Jack Chapman Miske which set him off. Miske was scornful of several British fans who had refused to fight, whereupon King referred to Miske as an Aryan superman, described his mind as paranoid, described him as on a par with Hitler, and in general sounds as if he were John the Baptist preparing the way for the coming of Claude Degler. Fitmore Katel (and you can guess about the reality of that name) filled a page with an equally unsatisfactory criticism of FAPA, although the poor fellow couldn't have had the foresight to know that exactly the same faults would persist in the organization for another thirty years. "Fans are too lazy to put out a worthwhile mag for the Fapa. All they need is something in the mailing to maintain their membership... The avid collectors, who want to get a copy of everything issued by fandom, continue their support and thus contribute to this disgrace to fan publishing and fandom in general." A shorter blast, this one at Damon Knight, directed this scornful insult at him: "Maybe you are going to turn professional." John B. Michel took out after Walt Daugherty, who had criticized some poetry by Robert W. Lowndes, mainly because of its erotic aspects. A sample of Michel as critic: "Pastels for Rosalind is a frankly sexual work which clearly tells the story of a frustrated lover rejecting the advances of the daughters of joy, simultaneously subtly imploring his loved one to assuage his passion. It is simple, direct, and true to life."

I don't know if the bad tempers exhibited in that issue formed a cause or a symptom of the approaching end of the fanzine. But the sixth issue never appeared in complete form. Yerke issued pages five through twelve as a separate publication. Most of it



was quite different from previous issues, a conreport on the Denvention. Among the several thousand wild notions I've acquired over the years is to issue someday a worldcon history which would consist simply of the best conreport issued on each year's event. The six pages in this issue don't tell too much about the events in Denver but they are crammed with what must have been the spirit of those pioneer worldcons. For instance:

"That night at the party, a large keg of foaming stuff was placed in the kitchen. Fans sneaked cautiously around it. Leonard Jenkins, a Denver man, had a small pump, and promptly pumped up pressure. Granny Widner led the fans in a devil dance around the sacred fluid, and Adam Lang (of no relation to Adam Link) turned the first tap. For the next hour we got nothing but foam. The party had to suffice on wine while McKeel, Martin, Wiggins, Madle and the others bailed out the foam. Towards eleven, we began to get some liquid. But then it was past hotel drinking hours and the barrel was removed. Cries of anger and remorse. The kiddies being boisterous lay down on a rug in the lobby and whistled at doormen. When they were kicked out, they took the rug with them and made an encampment on the street. All was going nicely when sirens were heard in the distance. Fortier wanted to know if they were blond or brunette sirens, but when he was told they were sirens with red lights, he joined the rest of us in scattering down a side street. The fans reformed again, slightly above 17th St. on Broadway, and headed northward looking for a bar." Yerke, who wrote the conreport, was proud of the way the Los Angeles fans had made the LA-Denver trip in 36 hours with only two drivers. "This is as good as Lindburgh did."

Someone sent me a printed announcement not long ago which revealed Tubby to be still alive and well, holding some kind of function in a library in California. I hope he realizes how many forms of pioneering he did with his fanzine and his writing.

--Harry Warner, Jr.

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